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RECENT OPINIONS ON NEW TESTAMENT CHRONOLOGY

The recent brochures of Koch,¹ Harnack,² and Westberg,³ treating certain phases of New Testament chronology, present conclusions which are radical and sometimes seemingly erratic. In an excursus at the end of his third volume of *Beiträge*, Harnack expressed the opinion that weighty arguments could be advanced for dating the Book of Acts early in the sixties. He was then content, however, to conclude that "Luke wrote in the time of Titus or in the early days of Domitian, but perhaps even at the beginning of the sixties." Koch has taken up this suggestion and worked it out, as he thinks, to a certainty. From Acts 28:30 f., where Paul is left in his own hired house to preach without hindrance, Koch concludes that the Book of Acts was written while Paul was still in this condition. The date, then, is not later than 62 A.D. The Gospel of Luke must have been written a year or two earlier, and Mark earlier still; and since Mark presupposes the existence of Matthew (here Koch follows Zahn), all our synoptic gospels existed by the year 61 A.D.

Harnack takes up his former suggestion of an early date for the Lukan writings, and commits himself definitely on the question. He arrives at much the same conclusions reached by Koch, with the exception of following the more usual view of placing Matthew after Mark. He assigns Matthew a date soon after the fall of Jerusalem, "yet composition before the catastrophe is not to be positively excluded." The first part of Harnack's discussion is taken up with a defense of his contention for the Lukan authorship of "Acts" and "Luke." In this he has little to add to his former arguments, and it is doubtful whether his reply to criticisms will seem more convincing than were his former statements. Apparently he does not attempt a comprehensive rebuttal of objections, for he quite ignores some of the most incisive criticisms that have been passed upon his former work.⁴ The discussion of the chronological problem is the feature of the present volume which naturally attracts most attention.

¹ *Die Abfassungszeit des lukanischen Geschichtswerkes: Eine historisch-kritische und exegetische Untersuchung.* Von H. Koch. Leipzig: Deichert, 1911. vii+102 pages. M. 1.80.

² *Neue Untersuchungen zur Apostelgeschichte und zur Abfassungszeit der synoptischen Evangelien* (Beiträge zur Einleitung in das Neue Testament. IV. Heft). Von A. Harnack. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1911. 114 pages. M. 3.80.

³ *Zur neutestamentlichen Chronologie und Golgathas Ortslage.* Von F. Westberg. Leipzig: Deichert, 1911. iv+144 pages. M. 3.

⁴ E.g., Bacon, "Professor Harnack on the Lukan Narrative" in the *American Journal of Theology*, XIII (1909), 59-76.

Harnack follows much the same line of argument as does Koch in placing Acts early in the sixties. The principal argument rests upon the fact that Acts breaks off with Paul "in his own hired house" preaching the gospel without hindrance. If Paul had been brought to trial the issue, it is held, would have been indicated. Subsidiary arguments are drawn from the silence of Acts regarding historical events in the seventh decade, and from the alleged primitive character of its terminology and theological notions. The second main argument for the early date is connected with Luke, chap. 21, the so-called eschatological discourse of Jesus. This as recorded in Luke is usually supposed to betray a knowledge of the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., but according to Harnack's dating this supposition must be shown to be false. The success or failure of this new chronological scheme may be said to hang upon these two crucial points—the interpretation of Acts 28:30 f. and Luke, chap. 21. While the world of New Testament scholarship places great confidence in Harnack's opinions, it seems doubtful whether these recent expressions of his convictions are likely to win general assent.

Westberg covers a wider field, also defending views expressed in an earlier work.¹ He had advocated 64 B.C. (instead of 63) as the date of Pompey's conquest of Jerusalem; 67 rather than 66 A.D. he held to be the beginning of the Jewish revolt which resulted in Jerusalem's fall; he set Jesus' death on April 3, 33 A.D. and his birth in 12 B.C. These views were severely criticized by Schürer, hence the author's restatement of his opinions. His fondness for unusual hypotheses appears also in his treatment of Paul. He rejects both the North and the South Galatian theory, and locates the Galatian churches in a northwestern province of Asia Minor "lying between Mysia, Lydia, Phrygia and Bithynia." He also follows Lisco and Deissmann in advocating an Ephesian imprisonment for Paul. The last thirty-six pages of the brochure are taken up with the problem of Golgotha's location. Westberg does not accept the traditional site, where the Church of the Holy Sepulcher now stands; he prefers the view which fixes upon the vicinity north of Jerusalem. He thinks he finds new evidence for this theory in the Essene letter which purports to have been written by an eye-witness of the crucifixion seven years after the event, and addressed to a brother Essene of Alexandria. Westberg admits the spuriousness of this document, which at intervals during the last two centuries has been imposed upon the public in Germany, England, and America, yet he thinks it embodies some other-

¹ *Die biblische Chronologie nach Flavius Josephus und das Todesjahr Jesu* (Leipzig, 1910).

wise unknown features of primitive Christian tradition. Whatever is to be said in favor of locating Golgotha north of Jerusalem, certainly no critical value can be attached to the alleged Essene manuscript.

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NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING ABOUT RESURRECTION

Professor Bowen writes a valuable book¹ on a subject which is deeply in need of more intelligent treatment. The subject is too complex and obscure to permit the expectation that any author will give full and equal satisfaction at every point, but Professor Bowen's book is on the whole a luminous and welcome contribution.

The strongest feature of the discussion is perhaps its presentation of the radical difference between Paul's view of the resurrection of Jesus and that which is most conspicuous in the Gospels. Paul witnesses to experiences and convictions of the disciples, while the Gospels witness to *post-mortem* acts of Jesus. With Paul the rising of Jesus is always from among the souls of the dead, in the Gospels it is from the grave. What Paul contended against in Corinth was essentially that view which later found expression in all the gospels and which has dominated Christian thought to the present. Paul's witness to the resurrection of Jesus is treated as fundamental. Then follows a discussion of Mark's data. Mark 14:28 is regarded as an interpolation, and the episode of the women at the grave owes its origin wholly to pious imagination. As to the empty grave, the whole course of events is held to be strongly against its probability. "It was not the three women on the morning of the third day who discovered the empty tomb: it was the Christian church about the year sixty." The empty tomb was the inference from the materialization of the original spiritual thought of resurrection. "Mark 16:1-8 is as truly a legend as the grotesque picture of Pseudo-Peter."

Professor Bowen regards Matthew's conception of the exact time of the resurrection as "psychologically and dramatically more true" than that of Mark. He admits that Matthew's note of time, read literally, puts the visit of the women *before* Sunday, but holds nevertheless that he meant to express by it Sunday morning. Matt. 28:9-10 are an interpolation. They break the connection and are in every

¹ *The Resurrection in the New Testament. An Examination of the Earliest References to the Rising of Jesus and of Christians from the Dead.* By Clayton R. Bowen. New York: Putnam, 1911. 490 pages. \$1.75.